

Simply One Page-Blessed and Bless

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision, my own editorial hand fueled by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff, 2501

One thing has become clear to me as I have pondered the Old Testament stories for a few years now. As men age, they bless others. William Butler Yeats's "Vicissitudes" expresses this beautifully:

**My 50th year had come and gone,
I sat, a solitary man, in a crowded London shop,
An open book, an empty cup on the marble table-top;
And twenty minutes, more or less,
It seemed so great my happiness,
That I was blessed — and could bless.**

This brief poem captures something profound about the human condition: life is often ordinary, even lonely. The world rushes by. We carry our worries, regrets, and ambitions. Yet, in the midst of this busyness and solitude, something unexpected happens: its like a hand of grace cracks opens the window of fresh understanding.

This grace moment is not something we chase or earn, but a gift that arrived while we are still. The blessing is not a result of achievement or perfection, but the fruit of presence, simply being open to the moment, however small or seemingly insignificant.

The empty cup on the marble table-top becomes a powerful image. When we engage life constantly working, striving, or "full" of our own concerns, we only possess emptiness. So, emptiness is all we have to share with others. But when we allow ourselves to be emptied, to receive God's grace and mercy anew, we gain the capacity to bless others authentically.

"I was blessed — and could bless."

This is the heart of the reflection. Blessing is a cycle. We can only give what we have first received. However in this wonderful world of grace, the truth is, our imperfect lives, lived in a busy world, do not disqualify us from blessing. Rather, they set the stage for grace to surprise us. All that is needed is to listen.

So why do seasoned men bless? Maybe because it takes this long to realize "I am blessed."

A Moment to Reflect

To what degree do I operate from the perspective of "I am blessed?" What does it feel like? What does it look like through me?